

Supervisor Romaine's 2015 Budget Adopted by Town Board

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Farmingville, NY - At the November 13 Town Board Meeting, Supervisor Ed Romaine's 2015 Budget was adopted by the Town Board. The Adopted Budget includes no increase in the Whole Town Tax Levy, right-sizes Town government through a reduction of 35 staff positions, without layoffs or cuts to services, and continues his commitment to the environment with \$5 million dedicated to open space purchases and \$2 million for environmental programs. The \$274.7 million spending plan builds upon the foundation established in Supervisor Romaine's first budget, which was unanimously adopted in November of 2013.

Supervisor Romaine said, "This budget keeps the Town moving in a positive direction through fiscal reform and elimination of unnecessary spending rather than service cuts, layoffs and over-reliance on our surplus. I commend the Town Board and our Commissioners for working with me to assure that we continue running the town in a more cost-effective way in the years ahead."

Key elements of the 2014 Operating Budget include:

- No increase in the tax levy for the Full Town Tax Districts (General & Highway Whole Town);

- Combined tax levy for the Outside Village Tax Districts, inclusive of special districts, remains flat;
- Compliance with the New York State Tax Levy Cap; the Town's Tax Rate and Spending Caps; and the Town's Debt Management Policy;
- Maintains compliance with the Town's Fund Balance Policy;
- Reduces the application of available surplus in the six major funds, by more than \$2.6 million, or 23% (\$3.2 million, or 26% across all funds), as compared to the 2014 Adopted Budget;
- Cuts the cost of debt service through application of debt reserve created through capital project closeouts;
- Fully funds the New York State Retirement Contributions without any borrowing from the state;
- Maintains existing programs and the delivery of constituent services despite rising fixed costs such as employee pensions, health care and energy; and
- Increases funding for Highway Snow Removal to reflect more recent snow trends, an increase of over \$1 million, or 40%.

The 2015 Budget continues the strong fiscal practices that have been recognized by Wall Street rating agencies that resulted in Standard & Poor's revising its outlook to Positive from Stable on Brookhaven's outstanding general obligation debt and assigning the Town an 'AA+' rating to its long-term bonds.

At the same time, the 2015 Budget furthers the Supervisor's commitment to improving the quality of life for the residents of Brookhaven. This budget:

- Increases funding for an additional Investigator in Code Enforcement to continue the crackdown on illegal rooming houses;
- Continues funding for Environmental Education;
- Continues a Waste Management initiative, initiated in 2014, which funds additional staff to address litter, property clean-ups and lawn maintenance of abandoned structures;
- Continues funding to support and enhance the Vacant Building Registry;
- Allows for the improvements to our on-line Building Department Permit Renewal system; and
- Increases spending for Senior Citizen programs and maintains spending levels for Women's Services and Youth.

The 2015 Budget also recognizes that the Town must continue to right-size our government. The Adopted Budget reduces staff by 21 full-time positions and 14 part-time positions through natural attrition and the exit incentive offered earlier this fall. This right-sizing effort will produce an annual savings in excess of \$1.5 million.

CAPITAL BUDGET

The 2015 Capital Budget includes \$50.4 million in new initiatives. Key elements of the 2015 Capital Budget include:

- \$22.2 million for road improvements, drainage projects and other Highway improvements and equipment;
- \$10.7 million for Landfill New Cell Construction;
- \$5.1 million for Parks improvements and equipment;
- \$5.0 million for Open Space acquisitions;
- \$2.0 million for environmental projects; and

- \$1.5 million in Special Districts

The Supervisor's 2015 Budget will be available for view on the Town's website at www.Brookhaven.org the first week in December.

Division of Public Information * Office of the Supervisor

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